DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 140 573 EC 101 208

AUTHOR Christensen, Genelle; And Others
TITLE How Can Teacher In-Service Be Made Effective in a Rural State?
PUB DATE Apr 77
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual International Convention, The Council for Exceptional Children (55th, Atlanta, Georgia, April 11-15, 1977)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Delivery Systems; Demonstration Projects; Elementary Secondary Education; *Gifted; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Models; *Rural Areas
IDENTIFIERS *Idaho

ABSTRACT

In a discussion of methods for providing inservice training in gifted education in a rural state, three model sites in Idaho are described. It is explained that the sites operate under the SAGE program (Statewide Assistance for Gifted Education). Program dimensions are said to include an itinerant model in which program facilitators travel from school to school, an outreach service, and cooperation from three state universities. (CL)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED140573

"HOW CAN TEACHER IN-SERVICE BE MADE EFFECTIVE IN A RURAL STATE?"

TAG: The Association for Gifted

CEC Presentation: Atlanta, Ga.
April 12, 1977

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Presentors:

Genelle Christensen - Coordinator for Gifted/Talented, Idaho State Department of Education: Boise
Tom Trotter - Region I, Project Director: Lewiston
Richard Leonard - Region II, Project Director: Meridian
Hank Lundgren - Region III, Project Director: Idaho Falls
Gail Hanninen - Intern/Consultant: Project SAGE

Introduction

This session will deal with methods of providing inservice training in gifted education within a rural state. An overview of the Idaho State Plan for Gifted/Talented, and three model district sites for training will be discussed.

Under Public Law 93-380, Section 404: Programs for Gifted and Talented, The State Department of Education in Idaho is providing Statewide Assistance for Gifted Education, called SAGE. With sagebrush being prevalent in Idaho, and "sage" meaning "wise", this acronym seemed most descriptive.

In a study conducted during 1976, the school enrollment in the state was approximately 200,000 students. Of this population, about 15 per cent (30,000 students) have been identified as having one or more exceptionalities. Since programs for all exceptional children in the State of Idaho come under the Special Education Section of the State Department of Education, the gifted/talented students are included as one group of exceptional students, comprising approximately 2½ to 3 per cent of the total school enrollment.

The Idaho State Legislature has provided a funding pattern for students identified as exceptional with a weighted ADA provided for each student identified, and with 80 per cent of the contracted salary of ancillary personnel reimbursed by the state. Included in "ancillary" are Directors and Supervisors of Special Education, Psychologists, Social Workers, Communications Disorders Specialists, Special Education Teachers and Teacher Aides. Although Idaho does not have specific certification requirements for Facilitators of Gifted/Talented, they are considered Special Education Teachers, and are funded the same as all other ancillary persons mentioned.

Since State-approved programs for gifted/talented students began in January, 1975, following the approval of the Idaho State Plan by the State Board of Education, there were eight school districts originally selected as pilot projects. During the school year 1976-77, twenty-four school districts were operating programs for gifted/talented students.

EC101208

The one area most lacking in the development of these programs has been the availability of training for teachers and other school personnel involved in these programs. Thus -- Project SAGE came into existence.

The main objectives of the SAGE grant are:

I. Establish statewide assistance for Gifted Education to help insure the implementation of the Idaho State Plan for gifted/talented, and to maximize impact throughout an essentially rural state.

II. Provide support to each of the three State Universities to design and offer contemporary preservice and inservice training.

III. Establish and support a Model Demonstration Program in each of Idaho's three Special Education Regions to implement and show best practices approach for Gifted/Talented.

IV. Disseminate information of innovative and best practice nature to all target groups in the State anticipating (or already providing) services for the Gifted/Talented.

Region I Demonstration Site: Lewiston Independent School District #1

In Region I, Lewiston School District was identified as the cooperating district in Project SAGE, which is a state department monitored, locally administered effort aimed at promoting gifted education throughout Idaho. Regional Project goals include:

I. Providing opportunities for other district and university faculty members to visit Lewiston's operational Gifted/Talented Program.

II. Producing two ITV thirty-minute programs on selected topics in gifted education.

III. Hosting regional training programs.

IV. Preparing and distributing an inservice/preservice training manual.

V. Providing placement opportunities for practicum students from colleges and universities.

Region I has twenty-five school districts--of which six are presently providing programs for the gifted, representing a student population of 40,000 in a predominantly rural area.

Lewiston Independent School District currently provides gifted education services at all grade levels, (K-12) in each of its District Schools, (7 elementary, 2 junior high, and 1 senior high school). Four full-time program facilitators (2 elementary level, and 2 secondary level), meet the program needs of 174 students or three per cent of the total student population.

Program type is itinerant in that program facilitators travel or rotate from school to school. It is designed as a "pull out" model, with students coming out of regular classroom sessions to participate in gifted/talented program functions.

The referral system is open. Identification procedures include: an individually administered intelligence test (with a cutting score at 130); achievement test results indicating skill development at +2 years above grade placement; and teacher or other school personnel input. Special aptitude tests and expert evaluations of student products help to identify those students gifted in other talent and ability areas.

Program dimensions include:

1. Small group interaction through seminar discussion of topical or special interest subject matter and through mandatory mini-courses designed to provide students with necessary 'tool skills' for conducting independent study, critical thinking, etc.

2. Student-oriented independent study; contracted, facilitator-monitored opportunities for students to explore selected topics or interest areas in depth.

3. Community placements or apprenticeship opportunities with a professional who acts as a mentor in exposing the student to real life dimensions of potential career or vocational interest areas.

4. Vertical acceleration in specific content areas.

In order to perfect program practices before offering them as a 'model' for others to observe, a formal program evaluation by an out-of-state consultant was conducted.

In addition, an Advisory Board comprised of District Staff and patrons and community representatives was established to provide insight into program strengths and weaknesses.

Attendance at conferences, and visiting other operational programs, has provided supportive information.

The primary training thrust will be through a comprehensive week-long workshop in June, 1977, designed around not only universal gifted/talented program concerns, but constructed to focus on regional concerns as fielded at the Regional Planning Conference.

Follow-through technical assistance will be provided by 'trouble shooting' teams who will respond to districts having difficulty in establishing local services; building a regional resource bank of materials; developing instructional strategies; and through the preparation and distribution of a program guide for reference in providing inservice training or establishing actual services.

Region II Demonstration Site: Meridian Joint District #2

Meridian School District has functioned as the demonstration site for Central Idaho. This district has involved 360 youngsters in the gifted program which serves grades K-12. For involvement with SAGE, inservice training needs have been directed at levels from Kindergarten through grade 6.

Through Project SAGE, workshops held in October, November, December, January and March, have brought people from 12 school districts throughout Southwest Idaho. In addition to the inservice programs, people from all over the state have visited these programs in action. College credit is offered for participants through the Boise State University Office of Continuing Education.

By participating in the video taping of two of the six 30-minute television sessions which are currently being shown in Idaho - this month and next - over E.T.V., information on student identification, program prototypes, and on evaluation has been disseminated. In connection with SAGE, personnel from the Meridian District have attended conferences on gifted education in Lake Tahoe, Salt Lake City, and San Francisco.

At this time, it is difficult to say how effective the outreach efforts have been. Next year, to assist in gifted program development, teams of facilitators will be sent to other districts. As a part of the SAGE inservice activities many different facets of Gifted/Talented Education have been experienced with emphasis being placed on programming and evaluation. Bloom's Taxonomy and the Multiple Talent Curriculum by Cal Taylor, University of Utah, continues to be popular with our facilitators and classroom teachers. Following each inservice session, an evaluation is conducted. The results have been very positive. Teacher units have been developed from these workshops and various student output and products will be forthcoming.

Region III Demonstration Site: Idaho Falls School District #91

A needs assessment of teachers and administrators in Region III, which comprises eastern Idaho, was conducted in the area of gifted education. The major need identified was that of inservice training for regular teachers to help them better meet the needs of the gifted students in their classrooms. Since the State of Idaho supports only gifted programs that are based on the mainstreaming philosophy, inservice training for regular teachers was given the top priority for our program.

The second major need for inservice training was directed to facilitators for gifted students who felt a need to have some in-depth training in curriculum, methods, and materials.

The third area identified was that of providing training to facilitators and administrators regarding the establishment and administration of programs for the gifted.

Plans were made to treat these three areas during the first year of the project.

The goals that the Idaho Falls SAGE Team has established are threefold:

I. To establish a core of well trained educators in eastern Idaho that know how to establish programs, use all available resources, and can teach gifted children.

II. To develop training packages, film strips, and audio visual presentations that can be sent out to any of the trained personnel to be used for inservice training at local school meetings throughout the region.

III. To establish a library to serve the region that will contain material available for loan or sale to all interested parties (Region III needs will have the top priority). In addition to training packages and filmstrips, the library will contain sample learning centers geared for the gifted, other educational materials, and files on community resources and mentor programs.

University Cooperation: Project SAGE

Three State Universities serve the respective regions previously described by the Demonstration Sites. These are: Region I: University of Idaho, Moscow; Region II: Boise State University, Boise; Region III: Idaho State University, Pocatello. As a part of the SAGE endeavor, each of the Universities is involved in developing courses relating to the teaching needs of the gifted and based upon the needs identified by the experiences of each of the Demonstration Sites.

Course work at this time has two dimensions. The first relates to those courses offered through the Office of Continuing Education at each of the Demonstration Sites as an inservice effort. Currently, two of the aforementioned universities are involved in this manner. An instructional television course entitled "An Overview of Gifted Education" is being considered for course credit for the 1977-78 school year. This is facilitated by the location of the ITV stations on each of the three State University campuses.

Secondly, regular course offerings are available. For example, all three State Universities provide an upper division course in the area of "Teaching the Gifted". In addition, some courses supportive of providing appropriate teaching skills for the gifted are available. Examples include "Teaching in the Cognitive Domain", "Creativity in the Classroom", "Education of the Gifted Child", "Seminar in Gifted Education", and others which are presently being developed.

For the future, consideration is being given to a defined course of study in teacher training for gifted education. However, this is currently in the embyronic stage, while teacher qualities, proposed training opportunities, and past experiences are being assessed.

STATE OF IDAHO

REGION I - Lewiston Ind. School District #1
University of Idaho, Moscow
KUID Channel 12, Moscow

Region II - Meridian Jt. School District #2
Boise State University, Boise
KAID Channel 4, Boise

REGION III - Idaho Falls School District #91
Idaho State University, Pocatello
KBGL Channel 10, Pocatello